

Good News



Community Presbyterian Church

March, 2009

From the Pastor

Shortly after I became a Christian, a member of our church decided to begin a mid-week adult Bible study. He had no formal training, but he had studied the Bible personally for years and thought something like this would be good for our church. Nancy and I went and it turned out to be a great introduction to Bible study and to Christian community.

One of the members of our group was a retired army nurse. Lucy lived alone out in the country and drove a red convertible Mercedes sports car. She, too, had studied the Bible before but apparently had focused on favorite sections. Every once in a while she would become uncomfortable with what we were reading and would say, "That's not in my Bible!" Sometimes, even when she was reading from her own Bible, she would finish the passage, close the book and say, "That wasn't in my Bible."

At the time I thought this was really strange. Now I understand better and think it is quite common. When Lucy talked about her bible she wasn't talking about the book she owned that had the title, *Holy Bible*. She was talking about her personal collection of holy words and stories which she carried around with her in her head, which she used to guide her life and to judge what was good and what was evil.

We each have our own bible. My personal bible includes a lot of Mark and Galatians and Matthew and Hebrews, Psalms and Isaiah and Jeremiah and Leviticus. (OK, I may be a little outside the norm.) Naturally my bible is broader and deeper than that of the average lay person, but it is still *my* bible and not *the* Bible and there is much of the Bible that is not yet part of my bible.

Someone told me that she is reading more of the Bible now than she ever has in the past. This has been interesting and inspiring, but it has also been unsettling. Using Lucy's terms you could say that this person is discovering that much of the Bible isn't in her bible and some of her bible isn't in the Bible.

This is a natural result of honest and serious Bible study. Sometimes it doesn't feel good. It feels like you are losing something familiar and sacred and trustworthy. You sense that it will take faith to accept what you are reading in the Bible, but faith is what you thought you had in the first place, and that seems to be fading away.

This is a natural result of honest and serious Bible study. And it is tempting to do what Lucy did: shut the book and say, "That's not in my Bible," and halt the growth that God is beginning to work within you.

But generations of Christians have followed God's leading, and worked through their feelings of discomfort and discovered that *the* Bible is much better for them, and much more trustworthy, than *their* bible. I have; and I trust that you can.

I have sometimes felt that much of Jesus' Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5-7) is not yet in my bible. (I can recite it by heart and I have studied it seriously for most of my life. But it takes such faith to live by it day by day!) I've not quit working on it though and my desire to make it part of my life is as great now as ever.

So I invite you to join me in adding some of this part of the Bible to your personal bible. During the 40 days of Lent work through our devotional, "More for Less." You can pick up a copy at church or go online at cpc-lent.blogspot.com.

Pastor Mark



Each Thursday at 6 PM

Lenten Supper & Study

March 5 — Choir serving Chili and Cornbread

March 12 — Deacons serving Lasagna

March 19 — Bag Ladies serving Meat Loaf

March 26 — Men's Group serving Crepes

Birthdays

4 Evelyn Pascoe
11 Dottie Gray
14 Jo Fisher
 Bob Williams
 Tyler Conrad
16 Maudie Todd
20 Anna Wrobbel

Financial Report

January income	\$ 6,618.00
January expenses	\$ 4,130.34
Checking acct. balance	\$ 1,435.98

Anniversaries

26 Larry & Kathy Mendonça



**More
for Less**

A devotional guide for Lent based on Jesus' Sermon on the Mount. Pick yours up at church or go online at cpc-lent.blogspot.com.



“Whoever loves money never has enough; whoever loves wealth is never satisfied with his income. This too is meaningless.” Ecc 5:10

March 1-7, 2009 is the 7th Annual Problem Gambling Awareness Week, a public awareness campaign sponsored by the National Council on Problem Gambling.

- Did you know that Americans spend more money on gambling than all other recreation combined??
- Research tells us 100 residents in a city Gustine’s size have a problem with gambling.

For most people gambling is a fun diversion, but for others it becomes a serious, life-altering problem. Very few people ever seek out treatment or services for this serious condition which responds well to treatment.

Here are some indications there is a problem with gambling:

- Gambling until funds are gone
- Gambling longer than planned
- Lying about gambling to friends & family
- Using money for gambling while bills go unpaid
- Unsuccessful repeated attempts to stop gambling
- Consideration of or breaking the law to get money to gamble with
- Borrowing money to be able to gamble
- Feeling depressed, remorseful, or even

suicidal because of gambling

- Gambling in attempt to get funds to pay bills

Problem gambling is no respecter of persons. Men & women; young and old of all races and religions are susceptible. Some predisposing factors include a stressful life event (loss of a loved one; divorce, etc.); an early big win; history of depression or alcoholism; family history of compulsive gambling or drug addiction.

There is hope and free treatment is available.

For more information:

Phone: 1-800-522-4700 (Confidential, 24hours)

Online:- www.npgaw.org

I have printed out a gambling screening quiz which is designed for self evaluation.

Copies are available at the church office.

May we be a contented people, realizing that God is the source of all blessings so that we are free to share without fearing for our future .

Blessings in this Holy season of Lent...

Nancy



COMMUNITY PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

399 Sixth Street
Gustine, CA 95322
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Permit No. 12
Gustine, CA 95322

Sunday School, 9:00 AM — Worship, 10:30 AM

Pastor — Mark Hollingsworth

Treasurer — Patricia Brown; Choir Director — Jim Conrad

Secretary — Med Hoover; Parish Nurse — Nancy Hollingsworth

Office Hours — 9:00-Noon, Wednesday, Thursday and by appointment

Telephone: (209) 854-6772; email: pastormark@wefollowjesusingustine.org

Web Site: www.wefollowjesusingustine.org



**Be sure to set your
clocks forward on
Sunday, March 8**